302
386

/427 cont./

Like their neighbors in the northeast and northwest, the Selk'nam and the Halakwulup, the Yamana use only three pigments for their decorative painting, namely, black, white, and red (106), which they apply as a powder mixed with water or

106. The majority of European visitors noted these three colors and mentioned them. See Fitz-Roy (a):139, Darwin (a) :238, Hyades (q) :349, Weddel:152, and others.

fish oil. They can get black pigment, yapusake (according to BD:554 also yapusŏx), most easily, which is nothing more than ground charcoal. This dust is usually rubbed dry over the whole body, but for the face it is mixed with fish oil before it is applied. This mixture is also used to draw lines and dashes.

The white pigment, tumarapu, is chalk. They value chiefly the pure, fine calcareous earth found in Puerto Róbalo and Puerto Eugenia, both in the central part of the north shore of Navarino Island. They take it out, soften it and knead it with water, form it into a lump, and keep it, ready for use, in a pouch made of gut. They obtain smaller amounts for urgent /428/ use by heating a few Mytilus shells in the hut fire and afterwards crushing them to a powder between stones. This chalk powder is never prepared with fish oil or blubber because it would lose its shiny white color. Instead of water they use their own saliva, which makes the mixture more adhesive when dashes or dots are drawn on the face or the body. With the incisors a little powder is scraped off the hard lump and mixed with saliva (107),

107. According to Hyades (q):300, there is even a special verb for this, namely, "Jamba (or Jampa) toumarapou: to chew clay in order to dilute it with saliva" /translated from French/.

obtained by a vigorous chewing motion, to form a thick paste. A finger is then moistened with it in the mouth if one wishes to draw coarse lines. When more delicate drawings are made with a

/428 cont./

302 386 little stick, the mixture is spit into the left palm and the stick dipped into it. If the whole body is to be painted, the white powder is mixed with a little water, and the thick paste is smeared over the skin with the flat of the hand. After it has dried, of course, this layer of color gradually falls off.

They go to some trouble to obtain the red pigment, known as ímí and more often ɛ́wɯa, which is used far more extensively. Their emotional preference for bright scarlet may play a decisive part here. Hyades (p):329 corroborates this (108): "they prefer

> 108. He also says: "Red is the favorite coloring matter of the Fuegians" /translated from French/. From the chemical analysis he gives we see that iron oxide is the chief ingredient of this earth mixture.

vivid colors, especially red" /translated from French/. In several places in the west, more frequently than elsewhere, one comes across thin layers of a yellowish or reddish or rust-colored mineral deposit, which is all the more desirable the less greasy and drier it is. Hyades (q):350 writes that the Indians "collect this ocher from pebbles to which it adheres; it shows that these stones probably were for a time in ferruginous water" /translated from French/. A lump the size of a fist is stirred with fresh water on an outspread rag of leather or a flat stone, kneaded well, and kept damp in the piece of leather until there is a sunny day with no wind. Then the embers of the hut fire are stirred up with some dry, sound wood. They wait until the smoke has disappeared and no breeze blows up the ashes, whereupon the still damp lump of clay is carefully placed in the fire so that it is thoroughly heated. It is vermilion when it is taken out with a stick. Ashes and embers are scraped off the surface, and it is pounded to a fine powder between stones. This powder is collected in a piece of sea lion gut. The Indians are almost superstitiously exact in the preparation of this red pigment, for they are extraordinarily appreciative of its glowing brightness which neither dirt nor ashes impairs. It is used often and in various ways, but they like it best for facial painting, and then almost always

[317] [415]

/428 cont./

302 in the form of a thick paste mixed with seal oil. It is prepared
•386 less often in the palm of the left hand, more frequently in a medium-sized Mytilus /429/ shell so that the mixture can be well stirred and evenly applied. The red coloring must be uniform.

302 413 As has already been mentioned, in using all three colors they sometimes prefer to mix the powder with oil or blubber instead of using it dry. If they want to make even strokes and precise dots, they cut a suitable painting stick, known as talaxikamána in the dialect of the west, puscitákutasena in the central dialect, derived from ikamána, "to paint," "to draw." The little stick is about ten centimeters long, sharp at one end and smoothly cut off and flattened like a spatula at the other end. It is used to draw lines. If they want to draw dots, they dip the other end into the color and place it on the skin like a stamp. Almost every woman carries this little stick around with her everywhere. The sponsor uses it daily to paint her candidate during the protracted initiation ceremonies, cíexaus. A person who is without one easily and quickly makes himself another (109).

109. Hyades (q):300 speaks of an "awl or spatula of wood" /translated from French/. Moreover, he gives linguistic expressions for the many patterns of drawing and painting, which are given in greater detail and probably complete in BD.

415 237 Since the white and, even more, the red pigments are valued, they are carefully kept in a kind of color pouch, known as yái or yáiyi. For this purpose they like to use the esophagus of the steamer duck (Tachyeres brachypterus), known as álakus yáiyi, or the small intestine of seals (110). A piece 25 to 45

110. Hyades (q):350 mentions them as "bags made from the windpipes of seals or porpoises /translated from French/, and Lothrop (b):133, as "small sacks made from the throats of seal" /cited in English/.

X881 346 /835 cont./ comfortable seating for many people and can be extended in length at will, so that all are safely under shelter.

X881 346 352 531 The Yamana, however, are not satisfied with this plain construction, but decorate it to a considerable extent on the inside. They are satisfied artistically with painting simple designs on wood. Formerly when they did not have the European iron ax, they scraped the bark off single small trunks with mussel shells and painted their designs directly on the exposed wood fibers. This is still done, but nowadays they more often make long, narrow little tablets with their ax, which are placed against the framework on the interior, are slightly curved at the bottom, and form an arch up to the highest center line. They are placed 40 to 60 centimeters apart and usually in such a way that two are opposite each other.

Finally, in the upper part of the framework they fasten short, small, painted tablets and sticks which hang down freely. The latter are 25 to 35 centimeters long, cylindrical, with a smooth surface and ends cut off straight. The thinner end points downward. The little tablets are always long and narrow, 20 to 45 centimeters long, seven to ten centimeters wide, and the corners are either rounded or sharp. In the latter case, the wider of the two narrow sides ends in a short, square little handle into which a small hole is bored or a flat notch is cut. The little tablets and sticks, yĕxalapáteg ikamanáki, are fastened by a tendon or reed stalk in the center of the vaulted framework where they hang down freely and lightly swing in the draft or the vibration of the framework (cf. the reproductions on Plates 2 and 3).

[386] If the Yamana wish to paint these ornamental plaques, as well as the small trunks and long, small tablets, they use the customary colors, black, white, and red, which they mix with seal blubber. They apply this mixture with their fingers, arranging dots and lines in varied patterns. The person painting them follows his artistic inspiration of the moment and his feeling for beauty; hence all kinds of combinations of lines, dots, and circles appear in manifold variety.

The Yamana repeatedly assured me that these ornamental objects had no particular meaning and served exclusively to beautify /836/ their čiĕxaus hut (256). They are left there after

256. Reproductions of these ornamental plaques

2: Cooper E-4 (no date) 1946 SH6 Yahgan SH6

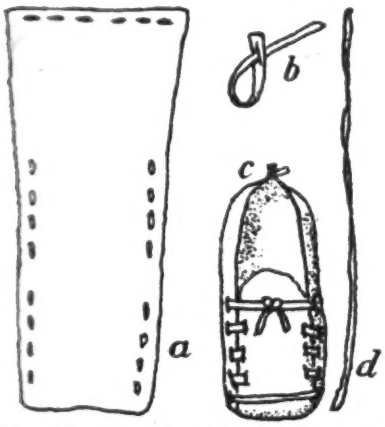

FIGURE 12.—Yahgan moccasin. (After Lothrop, 1928, fig. 46.)

291 probably borrowed them. The *Yahgan* occasionally used a rude fingerless working glove of hide. The clothing of the *Yahgan* seems to us utterly inadequate, given the climatic conditions—temperatures commonly around and well below freezing point in winter, high winds, frequent snow, hail, sleet, and cold rain—but in view of the seeming [177] role played in their decline by introduced European clothing and their relative good health prior thereto, perhaps their clothing was reasonably well adapted to the environment.

302 **Hairdressing and depilation.**—The hair was worn loose, not in braids, and was often banged. Sometimes a sort of tonsure was worn. A sharp-edged mussel shell was used to cut the hair. For [237] combing the hair, more commonly the jawbone of a porpoise or otter, or a toothed comb made of whalebone, was used; sometimes, a brush comb made of a bundle of roots (Outes and Bruch, 1910, p. 138) or of quills (Gusinde, 1937, p. 423). Depilation, with two mussel shells as tweezers, of all face and body hair was practically universal, for both sexes.

304 **Scarification.**—Scarification was practiced as a mourning observance and tattooing as an initiation rite (Gusinde, 1937, p. 868), but neither for ordinary decorative purposes. There was no head deformation, no ear, lip, or septum piercing, no body mutilation of any other kind.

302 **Painting.**—Smearing the head and body with grease or oil was as much protective as decorative. Face and body painting was common, sometimes with use of a small spatula. Only three colors—red, black, and white—were used. Red was derived from burnt earth, [286] black from charcoal, and white from clay. Red symbolized peace;

3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

301 a small hole near the lip of the shell. Through these holes a braided sinew cord was run, doubled back on itself, and lashed with spiral wrappings of sinew. This method of stringing is illustrated in fig. 50. The shells thus united are always graded according to size, sometimes with the biggest shell at one end and the smallest at the other, sometimes with the big shells in the middle and the small ones at either end.

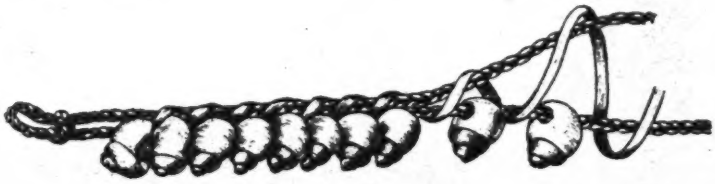

FIG. 50.—Detail of Yahgan shell necklace. Length of shells, one-half in. (14/2339)

USE OF PAINT

386 822 Like the Ona, the Yahgan made regular use of a red paint (*ímí*) obtained by burning earth, a black paint (*yapúshak*) made of charcoal, and a white paint (*tum'rápo*) of clay. According to Fitzroy (p. 177) and Dabbene (1907, p. 58) these colors have symbolic significance. Thus, white was the sign of war or ceremonial display, black was the mark of grief and mourning, while red denoted peace and happiness. With their paints the Indians 531 adorned their persons, their dance masks, their ceremonial lodges, and some of their tools and utensils. The latter were often embellished with solid color, but body, dance masks, and ceremonial lodges were made the field for painted designs.

In pl. IX is shown a selection of patterns taken from the frame of a ceremonial lodge. No simpler motives of artistic significance can be achieved, for these designs are mere smudges of color applied with thumb or finger. The elements are a dot, a short line, and, in one instance, a circle. Two lines are combined to form a cross, a T, and a chevron. Design units repeat themselves in simple rhythm.

Dance masks are illustrated in figs. 92 and 93. Their designs, though of symbolic significance, are again abysmally primitive. Facial painting may be studied in the photographs published by Koppers (1924); they are similar to the patterns here described.